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Victory Over Viet Cong May Require 10 More Years, British Report Says

By K. C. Thaler

LONDON, Oct. 6 (UPI)—A report published here today said that, even with American assistance, it may take "at least another ten years" to defeat Communist-led Viet Cong guerrillas in South Viet-Nam.

The conclusion was contained in a special study by the Royal Institute for International Affairs.

The Indonesian guerrilla war against Malaysia also could drag on for a similar period, according to the study published in the Institute's current magazine, "The World Today."

The assessment suggested that in the absence of a strong movement for regional cooperation in Southeast Asia, continued Western presence remains necessary.

If the United States and Britain were to withdraw from a front line role in those countries and become merely residual guarantors of a native defense system, comparable military assistance to South Viet-Nam and Malaysia must be forthcoming from the other powers in the region, the study said.

But, the report added, it is unlikely that Asian countries, unless directly attacked, would involve themselves militarily in South Viet-Nam and Malaysia.

The estimate of the likely 10-year period of guerrilla warfare in South Viet-Nam and Malaysia is based on past experience. It took nearly ten years to put down the threat of the Huk revolt in the Philippines and the Malayan emergency lasted from 1948 until 1960.

The main problem of aggression during the next ten years is held to be most likely concerned with subversion and local wars.

The study said the prospect of threats from a nuclear-armed Red China confirms the need for some form of continuing Western presence in Southeast Asia as the basis of a system of collective security.

The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, the study said, is not particularly effective against subversion in the treaty area. Its value as a deterrent to aggressors is debatable and its general usefulness after Peking acquires a token nuclear capability is open to question, it said.